

Message Text

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON GELB ARTICLE

FOR BROWN - S/PRS

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE PRESS GUIDANCE ON THE GELB ARTICLE.

2. BEGIN TEXT: SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED SINCE HIS CONFIRMATION HEARINGS IN 1973 THE NEED FOR AN OPEN AND RESPONSIVE FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON A BROAD BIPARTISAN PUBLIC CONSENSUS. HE IS CONVINCED THAT NO FOREIGN POLICY CAN BE EFFECTIVE WITHOUT SUCH BIPARTISAN SUPPORT AND HE HAS SPENT AN UNPRECEDENTED AMOUNT OF TIME AND EFFORT OUTLINING TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THE BASIS OF OUR POLICY. HE HAS DIRECTED SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO DO SO AS WELL, AND TO MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO GAIN A SENSE OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES AND CRITICISMS.

IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE SECRETARY ANNOUNCED IN A PUBLIC SPEECH LAST NOVEMBER THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS BEGINNING A SERIES OF "TOWN MEETINGS" IN A NUMBER OF CITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY. THE PURPOSE OF THESE MEETINGS WAS TO PERMIT OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO MEET WITH INTERESTED PRIVATE GROUPS TO GET THEIR VIEWS ON CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, WITH PARTICULAR UNCLASSIFIED

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EMPHASIS ON LEARNING OF THEIR CONCERNS AND CRITICISMS.

THE FIRST "TOWN MEETING" WAS HELD IN PITTSBURGH IN FEBRUARY;
FOUR OTHERS WERE HELD THEREAFTER IN VARIOUS CITIES OVER
A THREE MONTH PERIOD.

EACH OF THE FIVE MEETINGS WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC,
COVERED BY THE PRESS, AND REPORTED IN THE NEWSPAPERS IN
EACH CITY. IN ADDITION, A NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER
ACCOMPANIED THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS TO THE FIRST
MEETING IN PITTSBURGH, ATTENDED MOST OF THE DISCUSSION
SESSIONS AND REPORTED IN THE TIMES ABOUT THE PITTSBURGH EXPER-
IMENT AFTER IT CONCLUDED. THE REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE
SECRETARY AFTER EACH MEETING WERE SENT, AS WELL, TO THE
PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS IN EACH CITY.

AS TO THE "TOWN MEETING" THEMSELVES, THE SECRETARY
SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS
INVOLVED SHOULD INVITE CRITICISM OF PRESENT POLICIES AND
EXPRESSIONS OF PUBLIC CONCERN, WHICH THEY DID. HE ALSO
INSTRUCTED THAT THE REPORTS WRITTEN AFTER EACH "TOWN
MEETING" SHOULD GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE CRITICISMS
HEARD IN EACH CITY, WHICH THEY DID. THUS, IT IS HARDLY
REMARKABLE THAT THE REPORTS REFERRED TO IN THE NEW
YORK TIMES ARTICLE TODAY PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE
CRITICISMS THE VARIOUS STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS
ENCOUNTERED IN THE CITIES THEY VISITED.

THE "TOWN MEETINGS" WERE, IN OUR VIEW, A HIGHLY
INNOVATIVE EXPERIMENT IN A MORE OPEN FOREIGN POLICY,
AND IN HOW GOVERNMENT CAN BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE
PUBLIC. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE THEM. FURTHER,
ALTHOUGH THE TECHNIQUES USED WERE FAR LESS SCIENTIFIC
THEN THOSE USED BY PROFESSIONAL POLLING INSTITUTIONS,
WE BELIEVE THE REPORTS PROVIDED A VALUABLE INSIGHT
INTO PUBLIC ATTITUDES, CRITICISM, AND CONCERNS.

THE "TOWN MEETING" REPORTS PREPARED FOR THE
SECRETARY ARE AVAILABLE IN THE PRESS OFFICE FOR ANYONE
WHO WISHES TO HAVE THEM. KISSINGER

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